



State of North Carolina Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY CELEBRATES 2006 AS YEAR OF MUSIC WITH 'N.C. IN TUNE'

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley today announced that North Carolina will honor and promote the tradition of music in the state in 2006. As part of "N.C. In Tune," the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources will spotlight Tar Heel music and musicians.

"Music enriches the state's culture," Easley said. "From the blues, gospel and Blue Ridge Mountain music traditions to classical sounds of the symphony, North Carolina has something to offer all music lovers. From the beaches to the mountains, natives and visitors can 'tune-in' to musical celebrations throughout 2006."

While perhaps best known for its bluegrass, blues, and gospel traditions, North Carolina is also home to a thriving musical scene that includes jazz, contemporary, classical and Indie rock. The state boasts more than 1,200 music organizations, including 48 performing organizations dedicated to orchestral music. The N.C. Arts Council has supported music in all forms for more than 40 years by funding performance series, organizing showcases for musicians, and through composer and songwriter fellowships.

North Carolina music is a major attraction of cultural tourism, which remains the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry. Cultural travel accounts for up to 40 percent of tourism in the state and cultural travelers spend nearly twice as much as general travelers in North Carolina. As a way to attract more of these visitors, the "N.C. In Tune" celebration is featured on the 2006 State Transportation Map.

North Carolina music notables include James Taylor, Roberta Flack, John Coltrane, Doc Watson, Shirley Caesar, Thelonious Monk, Nina Simone, and Earl Scruggs. Among the newer names making a mark in popular music are Tift Merritt, Ryan Adams and Vaughn Penn.

There are many ways to celebrate "N.C. In Tune" this year. Visitors and residents can:

- Attend one of more than 170 concerts by the N.C. Symphony, a full-time professional orchestra. The N.C. Symphony was the first state-funded symphony orchestra in the United States and will celebrate its 75th year in 2006.
- Visit the mountains and enjoy a musical performance along the Blue Ridge Music Trail, a self-directed driving trail organized by the N.C. Arts Council that features more than 160 music